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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000102

SENSITIVE
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TAGS: [ENRG](#) [KGHG](#) [SENV](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: GOK WILL NOT ASSOCIATE WITH COPENHAGEN ACCORD

REF: A. KUWAIT 43
[1](#)B. STATE 3079

Classified By: Economic Counselor Oliver B. John for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) On January 31st, Econoff followed up on the status of Kuwait's deliberations on associating with the Copenhagen Accord with Captain Ali Al-Haider, the Deputy Director General for Kuwait's Environmental Public Authority (KEPA) (ref B). Al-Haider, the head of Kuwait's interagency climate committee, stated that after consulting internally and regionally with GCC officials (ref A), the GoK decided to not associate itself with the Accord. He added that the GoK would be sending a detailed response to the UNFCCC Secretariat office outlining the reasons for the decision, which he characterized as "economic, political and consensus-based."

[1](#)2. (C) Al-Haider explained that during the January 25th GCC meeting, held in Kuwait, all six GCC countries declined to associate with the Accord. Four countries, including Kuwait, would be sending their dissent responses to the QFCCC secretariat for the official record in the coming days. (Note: The dissent had not been sent at the time Econoff met with Al-Haider. End Note.) Al-Haider claimed that during the meeting he called upon Saudi Arabia and Qatar, the two countries not planning to respond on the record, to document their dissent position and "not keep quiet" so that their silence would not be later misunderstood to mean tacit support for the Accord.

[1](#)3. (C) Al-Haider noted that, from a GCC perspective, the Accord was not beneficial given the GCC's dependence on oil. He added that the GoK did not want to break consensus with the other GCC countries. Al-Haider remarked that the GCC's collective concern is that, while the Copenhagen Accord is not presently a legally binding document, eventually it could become one. When Econoff asked why the GoK declined to associate with the Copenhagen Accord, but was a 2005 signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, Al-Haider stated that the Kyoto Protocol would expire in 2012 and only had teeth if the signatories invested financial and technical capacity. Al-Haider added that the Kyoto Protocol had a scaled emission reduction strategy, while the Copenhagen Accord requires a commitment to a specific reduction percentage. As it stands, Al-Haider implied, the GoK reaps the benefits of being a Kyoto Protocol signatory without the pressures of implementing the requirements.

[1](#)4. (C) Politically, Al-Haider commented that the GoK "off the record" was not happy with the Copenhagen Summit leadership's response to the tensions at the summit. Al-Haider stated that he and other participants felt that some world leaders at the summit behaved and spoke in an "imperial" tone and manner, "dictating" to the rest of the assembly. Al-Haider implied that the GoK and the GCC's dissent are in part

intended as a form of rebuke for this perceived slight.

15. (C) Comment: The GoK response to the Copenhagen Accord is disappointing, given recent Kuwaiti conversations about their interest in investing in renewable energy. Although the Kuwaitis have taken some steps to explore renewable energy and "talk a good game" in meetings with USG officials, they are clearly unwilling to buck regional petroleum-exporting state consensus on this issue by taking a leadership role. Nonetheless, Post plans to reclaim the Kuwaiti position at higher levels within the GoK in coming weeks. End comment.

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